

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 00205 271845Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 INSE-00
AID-05 /068 W
-----061555 271856Z /45

R 271045Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1474
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION GENEVA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS BC ZA
SUBJ: ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEES IN BOTSWANA

REF: 77 GABORONE 2986

1. UNHCR RESREP PERKINS TOLD EMBOFF THAT CURRENT RHODESIAN
POPULATION IN REFUGEE CAMPS STANDS AT

FRANCISTOWN 1200
SELEBI-PIKWE 3000

2. PERKINS SAID THAT AFTER PERIOD OF INACTIVITY AT END OF
1977 (SEE RFTEL) REFUGEE FLIGHTS FROM SELEBI-PIKWE TO LUSAKA
HAVE RESUMED AT RATE OF SEVEN TO TEN A WEEK. PERKINS ADDED
THAT UNHCR ITSELF WOULD CONTRACT FLIGHTS TO MOVE OUT LARGE
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AND GROWING NUMBERS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN. PERKINS DID NOT
SEEM TO FEEL THAT FLIGHT OF NONCOMBATTANTS TO BOTSWANA IS
DIMINISHING, AS SUGGESTED BY REMARKS OF GOB OFFICIAL REPORTED
PARA 2C GABORONE 0195 (NOTAL). AT MOMENT, PERKINS SAID,
UNHCR IS USING HELICOPTER TO REACH GROUP OF 200 ZIMBABWEAN
REFUGEES WHO HAVE RECENTLY CROSSED OVER TO BOTSWANA AND ARE
CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO FLOODED RIVERS.

3. PERKINS SAID FOOD FOR CAMPS WAS TIGHT, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS INTENSIFIED BY RECENT DOWNPOURS. NEVER-THE LESS, ALTHOUGH SOME MAY HAVE MISSED A MEAL OR TWO, NO ONE IS STARVING.

4. CONCERNING ZAMBIA, PERKINS OBSERVED THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME UNHCR WAS PROVIDING DIRECT REFUGEE RELIEF TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CAMPS, TO WHICH UNHCR OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN GIVEN ACCESS. UP TO NOW, PERKINS SAID, ONLY THE ZAMBIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAD ACCESS TO THE CAMPS.

5. COMMENT: ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEE SITUATION HERE SLIGHTLY IMPROVED OVER END OF 1977 BECAUSE OF RESUMPTION OF CHARTER FLIGHTS TAKING REFUGEES TO ZAMBIA. NEVERTHELESS, NUMBERS OF CAMP REFUGEES SEEM TO REMAIN ABOUT THE SAME, AT THE OVER-CROWDED 4200 MARK REPORTED NOVEMBER REFTEL.

ALBERTI

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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